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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

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IN REPLY REFER TO

Op-92/c11
Ser 00334P92

8 SEP 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
THE DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Subj: Kashmir (U)

1. In studying the various reports and talking to various interested parties about the present situation in Kashmir, it has occurred to me that we may be overlooking in our intelligence reporting a point of some importance in this regard. I refer particularly to the Soviet and Chinese Communist interest in this affair.

2. Not very long ago in a long private conversation with the Chinese Nationalist Minister Yu Ta-wei, he indicated to me that he had convincing evidence that the Soviet Union has a plan for the seizure of Sinkiang Province at such time as relations with China would warrant its execution, that is to say, when China either became a direct threat to the Soviet Union or so weakened that another occupying power, such as ourselves or the Chinese Nationalists, might constitute a potential threat through China. I am inclined to think that Yu Ta-wei knows what he is talking about and that the Chinese Communists themselves have been aware of such a plan for some time. It may be that it is for this reason that the Chinese Communists have made such an effort to establish a firm military position in Tibet and to gain control of the Ladakh area. As you will note from the geography of the situation, Tibet and Ladakh flank Sinkiang. The mountains in the Ladakh area run in a northwest-southeast direction. The Chinese have reportedly either completed or are in the process of completing a road from Tibet across Ladakh to the western end of Sinkiang where Chinese Turkestan adjoins the USSR. The Indians have presented an obstacle to the Chinese Communists in control of this strategic area and are compelled by conditions of climate, terrain and weather to reinforce their outposts there by means of the road that runs from Srinagar and Kargil to Leh. The season for completion of this reinforcement is almost at an end.

3. Returning to the Kashmir situation, it appears that aside from the Azad-Kashmir attempt to create an uprising at the Poonch area, the Pakistanis were also interdicting the road to Leh in the vicinity of Kargil by virtue of occupation of commanding heights from the Pakistani side of the cease fire line. As you know, the Indians dislodged the Pakistanis from these positions. The Indian Naval Attache, Captain Batra, tells me that the sole purpose of this was to relieve interdiction of the resupply of Leh.

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Op-92/e11
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4. In addition to the above, I am sure you have noted the rather considerable evidence of collusion between the Chinese Communists and Pakistani governments, which may well have had as its objective preventing the Indians from creating any obstacle to the Chinese Communist activities in the Ladakh region.

5. Thus, behind the already highly charged political and religious ramifications of the Kashmir problem may well lie the basic problem of the Sino/Soviet split and the historic apprehension each has of the other in this strategic area. Consequently, I believe that we should consider carefully in our intelligence assessments the degree to which both the Chinese Communists and the Soviet Union may be using Pakistan and India for their own purposes in this game.

Very respectfully,



RUFUS L. TAYLOR
Director of Naval Intelligence

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7 September 1965

NOTE TO: Mr. Enright

SUBJECT: Comment on Admiral Taylor's Memorandum

1. No doubt the Soviets do have some interest in Sinkiang. They were there in the 1940's, and withdrew only slowly and painfully after the war. Chiang Kai-shek never fully controlled that region.

2. Perhaps they have a plan to seize Sinkiang. But we should be interested to know what evidence Yu Ta-wei had.

3. The road across Ladakh was indeed built by the Chinese in Indian territory some seven years ago, and has been in use ever since. However, it is more to support the Chinese position in Tibet, by way of Sinkiang, than to support Sinkiang. The Chinese have good direct communications to Sinkiang.

4. In short, we doubt that the Sinkiang situation has much to do with the present conflict between Pakistan and India. This is not to say that the Sino-Soviet dispute is unrelated to the present warfare, but we do not think that either the Chinese or the Soviets stimulated the military confrontation to serve their own purposes.

(See OCI's memorandum of 7 September on Chinese Communist intentions and capabilities with respect to the Kashmir crisis.)



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